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BUILDING NEW HOMES FAR FROM HOME...

Winter was coming. The temperatures dropped. Food was scarce and so was shelter. The first English settlers in Massachusetts Bay had to learn how to build their homes <u>from scratch</u>. They shoveled <u>dugouts</u> in hillsides and built wigwams to ensure protection against the elements. None of these first primitive dwellings survive to our times.

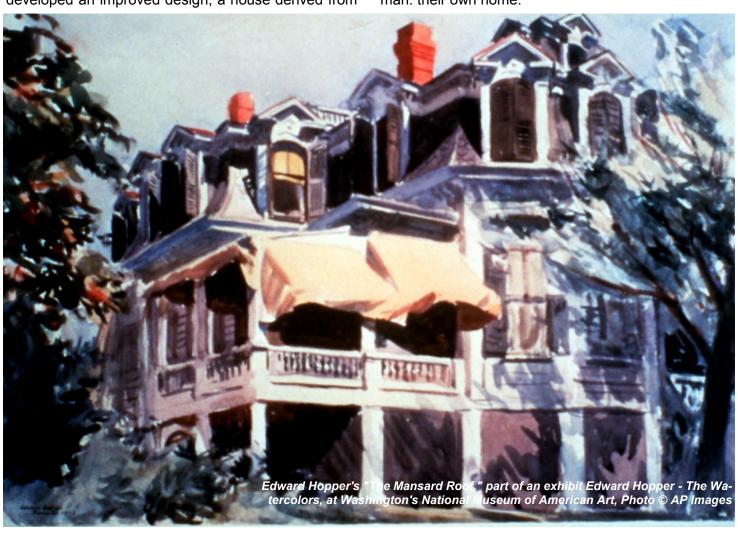
Later, when the settlers were better off, they started building cottages as they knew back in England, with thatched roofs and spaces in the wooden frame filled with plaster. These houses proved inadequate, too fragile for New England weather.

In the second half of the 17th century the colonists developed an improved design, a house derived from

the English traditions but adapted to the climate. On the outside, the upper floor <u>projected</u> beyond the lower floor, while inside there was a large stone fire-place able to warm the interior. Frequently, an addition was built on one side or at the rear and would house a kitchen with <u>pantries</u> or bedrooms.

Dutch traditions were a bit different, and so were Spanish, and Swedish, and ... many others.

In this issue of *Zoom* we look at how different national traditions of home building developed in the New World, changing and adapting to American weather and soil and <u>deriving</u> from the wisdom of native inhabitants to build the most essential abode for each man: their own home.



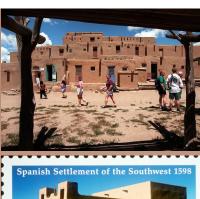
In This Issue: Home Architecture Zoom in on the USA

ADOBE IN CONSTRUCTION



(clockwise from the photo above) Ancient cliff dwellings at Canyon de Chelly National Monument, Arizona; Tourists visit Taos Pueblo, New Mexico; The stamp shows a replica of the church at San Gabriel, located in present day Espanola, New Mexico; The Martinez family's home, which was built by ABC's television show "Extreme Makeover: Home Edition" in Albuquerque's Trumbull Village neighborhood.

All Photos © AP Images







One of the Oldest & Lasting Materials

Adobe is a material used in the construction of homes. It is made from clay, straw, sand and water which are mixed and baked to form hard bricks. Thanks to availability of the ingredients, cheapness and durability, it has been known and used for centuries on end, and is one of the oldest building materials in the world. Taos Pueblo in New Mexico (see the photo in the top right-hand corner) is over 1000 years old and is still inhabited today. A World Heritage Sight visited by hundreds of thousands of tourists each year, today it is home to over 190 dwellers who live there permanently.

Accommodation for Many Families

In America, Indians built pueblos (Spanish for villages) using abode as construction material. Located at first in hard to reach areas for safety reasons (see a spectacular ancient cliff dwelling in the wall of Canyon de Chelly in the photo above), the adobe pueblos were laid out in the shape of a letter D or E, and had several stories. Numerous rooms could house well over a thousand people. Their inner part often enclosed a court-yard.

The Spanish Contribution

These enclosed <u>patios</u>, alongside <u>porches</u> held up with posts called zapatas, heavy wooden doors and elaborate <u>corbels</u> are the Spanish contributions to adobes (shortened name for an adobe house). It was indeed

the Spanish who introduced wooden <u>molds</u> into the production of adobe bricks. Before, adobe had just been spread in layers and left to dry.

House that Guarantees Thermal Comfort

Apart from their color, shape and eye pleasing natural charm, adobe houses are ideal for the hot and dry climate of the southwestern states. The thick walls absorb the heat of the day which warms the rooms during the night. The interior retains a relatively constant temperature, even when there are huge variations of temperatures outside reaching forty degrees Fahrenheit or more. Adobe houses are said to be "cooler in summer and warmer in winter."

For Every Pocket

With the new interest in green building, adobe has been making a successful comeback into the building industry, especially in such states as New Mexico, Arizona and California. Houses can be cheap, especially if owner-built, but they can also be very costly, and combine the natural material with ultra modern technologies of solar aperture, energy saving window units, not to mention artistic and handmade interior décor including for example hand-carved entry doors, lintels, corbels, or the adobe hand-shaped nichos (niches) or bancos (benches).

Text by AIRC Krakow

ARCHITECTURAL STYLES IN BRIEF

The so called **Colonial** style of the mid-17th c. reveals English, Dutch and Spanish influences. The English colonists were fond of building their homes in rows and subscribed to the requirements of the renaissance symmetry. The Dutch characteristic was a gambrel roof, while the Spanish preferred flat roofs and used the locally known adobe in the construction of homes. The 18th and 19th century witnessed three prevalent styles, which have been termed Early National, Romantic, and Victorian. The Early National style includes the Federalist style which made frequent use of small windows above the doors, called fanlights, and followed a 16th century Italian architect Andrea Palladio, especially in his classic design of windows. The Greek Revival style also falls in the Early National, and, as the name suggests, is reminiscent of Greek classicist architecture with its fondness of columns and temple fronts. The Romantic period, popular in the second half of the 19th century consists of Gothic Revival style, characterized by pointed arches, finials,

and battlements, and the Italianate, with tall windows and very decorative cornices. The Victorian style, also popular in the second half of the 19th century, cherished round shapes, gables, and rich, impressive masonry. The turn of the 20th century introduced the Prairie type as well as International, Art Moderne and Art Deco styles with their futuristic and geometric designs, and simple and elegant facades. A very interesting period was the years around 1910 - 1945 which brought about the revival of many older historical periods. These Revival styles included: the Colonial, Dutch, Tudor, Neoclassical, Spanish, Mission, Beaux Arts and Italian Renaissance. The post-war period got rid of ornaments and stylistic forms. It valued functionality and ignored history. The Modern style, as it was called, was followed by the Postmodern, which we witness nowadays. As a reaction to modern, it returns to history, but mixes historical styles in its own combinations. Eclecticism and simplification are characteristics of this style.











(clockwise from the top left photo:)The Sarah Kendall House in Newport, Rhode Island, built in 1871, is one of the state's many historic Colonial homes; a small rock farmhouse built in 1700 in Pasadena, Maryland; "Hatfield House" in Philadelphia's Fairmount park is shown in this November 20, 2005 photo; The Sedgeley Porter's House, designed by Benjamin Henry Latrobe, who would later design the U.S. Capitol, is seen in Philadelphia's Fairmount Park on November 20, 2005; Children from a tour group stream from the small house where President Andrew Johnson was born in Raleigh, North Carolina. The house now sits on the grounds at the Moredecai Historic Park in Raleigh

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ACTIVITY PAGE

Win a Prize! September 2009 CONTEST



Home & house ... What is the difference between these two words?

Send the answer (with your home address) to: madridirc@state.gov

Deadline: October 31

Win a Prize!

The answer in the July-August contest was: "13 states"

Thank you for participating

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Exercise 1

Here are some idioms with the word "home". Match the meanings below with the idiomatic expressions:

- a) bring home the bacon,
- b) chickens come home to roost.
- c) eat someone out of house and home.
- d) make oneself at home.
- e) do one's homework,
- f) nobody home,
- g) nothing to write home about.
- 1. nothing special or remarkable
- 2. the person who did something wrong will always be caught up by the consequences
- 3. be well prepared
- 4. earn a living, manage financially
- 5. a/ a mentally impaired person b/ no one is paying attention
- 6. eat so much that there are no re sources left
- 7. (often said to a guest:) feel and act as if in one's own home

Exercise 2 Topics for d i s - cussion:

1. George Washington said: I had rather be on my farm than be emperor of the world.

There are a lot of famous quotes and sayings about home that have set in for good in all languages. Some other sayings and phrases often used in English include:

- home, sweet home,
- there's no place like home,
- homeward bound,
- feel homesick.

Work with another student and try to find equivalents to the English phrases above in your own language. Can you think of some other sayings, quotes, and phrases?

2. Have you ever changed houses? If yes, what can you remember about your old home? How does it compare with your new one? Tell the other student about your old home. If you have never moved, think of the reasons why people are so sentimental about their homes from the past.

Glossary

(in the order of appearance)

<u>from scratch</u> - from the very beginning <u>dugout</u> - a shelter dug in the ground

thatched - (of a roof) covered with straw, reeds or other such material

project - extend outward

pantry - a small room in which food is kept

derive - originate

<u>patio</u> - a paved outdoor area adjoining a house <u>porch</u> - a covered shelter projecting in front of the entrance of a building

<u>corbel</u> - a projection jutting out from a wall to support a structure above it

<u>mold</u> - a hollow container used to give shape to molten material

<u>lintel</u> - a horizontal support across the top of a door or window

<u>gambrel</u> - a roof with two sides, each of which has a shallower slope above a steeper one <u>prevalent</u> - predominant, powerful

finial - an ornament at the apex of a roof battlement - a parapet at the top of a wall with regularly spaced, squared openings for shooting

cornice - an ornamental molding around the wall of a room just below the ceiling
 gable - the part of a wall which has the end of a pitched roof

(from The New Oxford American Dictionary)



This is an interior view of the dining area at the Col. Joshua Harnden Tavern historical site in Wilmington, Massachusetts. The 200-year-old structure, which has served as farmhouse, tavern and a stop on the underground railroad, was saved by the community when it was scheduled to be leveled and replaced with an office building in 1971. Photo © AP Images